

DoD Sikes Act Guidance



Report Documentation Page				Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188	
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1. REPORT DATE 01 AUG 2004		2. REPORT TYPE N/A		3. DATES COVERED -	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE DoD Sikes Act Guidance				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S)				5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Office of the Secretary of Defense ODUSD (I&E)				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release, distribution unlimited					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES See also ADM002111. Department of Defense Conservation Conference. Held in Savannah, Georgia on August 22-27, 2004, The original document contains color images.					
14. ABSTRACT					
15. SUBJECT TERMS					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT UU	18. NUMBER OF PAGES 12	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT unclassified	b. ABSTRACT unclassified	c. THIS PAGE unclassified			

Background

- Sikes Act Improvement Act requires each military installation with “significant natural resources” to prepare and implement an Integrated natural Resource Management Plan (INRMP)
 - 378 INRMPs required
 - Due date: November 18, 2001
- Sikes Core Group
 - Formed to help complete INRMP coordination (DoD, FWS, IAFWA)
 - Provides policy guidance and oversight

Current DoD INRMP Guidance

- DUSD(I&E) Policy Memo, 10 October 2002
 - Replaced August 1998 policy memo
- General Guidance in DoD Instruction 4715.3 remains in effect
- INRMP Handbook – “Resources for INRMP Implementation”
 - Under revision

Benefits of INRMP Guidance

- Enhanced Coordination with All Stakeholders
- Improved Efficiency of INRMP Review and Coordination
- Improved Implementation
- Increased Ties between Natural Resources and Military Readiness

Enhanced Coordination with All Stakeholders

- External to DoD
 - FWS and State Agencies
 - Public
- Internal to DoD
 - Military operators and trainers
 - Cultural Resources
 - Pest management
- New metrics track
 - Whether coordination occurred
 - Whether projects were added

Improved Efficiency of INRMP Review and Coordination

- Defines the coordination process
- Provides suggested review deadlines
- Increases availability via the Internet
- Spreads the workload for new revisions

Improved Implementation

- Identifies if projects are listed
- Identifies \$ spent
- Defines “implementation”
- Tracks feedback from stakeholders
- Metrics will be reported annually

Increased Ties between Natural Resources and Military Readiness

- Coordinates with military trainers and operators
- Provides increased flexibility
 - INRMPs as a substitute for critical habitat designation
- Reduces resource degradation that may affect training
- Tracks management objectives to protect mission capabilities

Additional DoD INRMP Guidance

- Scope of the Review
- Public Comment on INRMP Reviews
- ESA Consultation

Scope of the Review

- A formal review must be performed by “the parties” at least every five years
 - “Review” does not necessarily mean “revise”
 - Written documentation strongly recommended
- Informal annual reviews facilitate adaptive management
 - Review goals and objectives
 - Establish a realistic schedule to undertake proposed actions

Public Comment on INRMP Reviews

- There is no legal obligation to invite the public either to review or to comment upon the parties' mutually agreed upon decision to continue implementation of an existing INRMP without revision.
- If the parties determine that revisions to an INRMP are necessary, public comment shall be invited in conjunction with any required NEPA analysis.

ESA Consultation

- In most cases INRMPs will incorporate by reference the results of an installation's previous species-by-species ESA consultations, including any reasonable and prudent measures identified in an incidental take statement.
 - Neither a separate biological assessment nor a separate formal consultation should be necessary.
 - Nonetheless, because the INRMP may include management strategies designed to balance the potentially competing needs of multiple species, it may be prudent to engage in informal consultation.